DBH Division of Behavioral Health

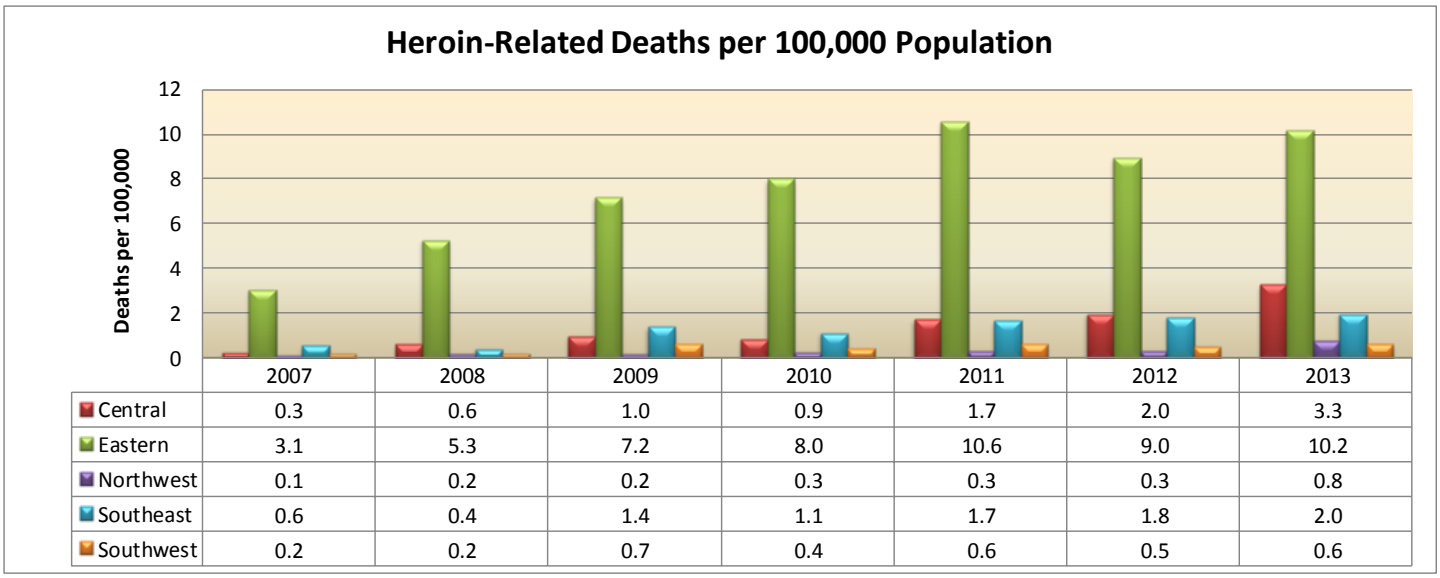
Missouri Department of Mental Health
Division of Behavioral Health

July 2014

Mark Stringer
Division Director

Heroin-Related Deaths in Missouri: An Update

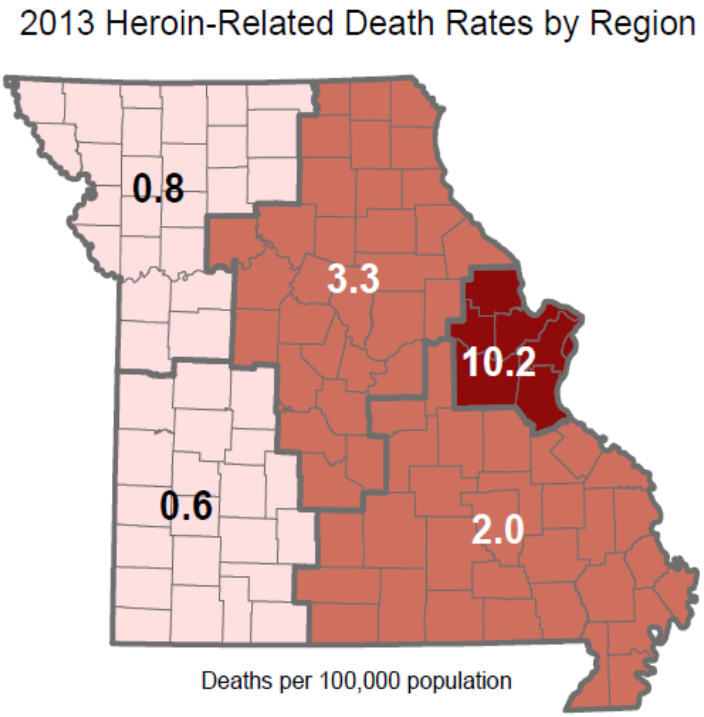
Heroin-Related Deaths Remain Elevated: Missouri has had over 200 heroin-related deaths each year during the past three years.[1] These deaths include drug overdoses as well as other causes of death where heroin may have been a contributing factor. Heroin-related death rates remain significantly higher for Eastern Missouri compared to other portions of the state; however, Central Missouri, in particular, has realized substantial increases in recent years. Provisional numbers for 2013 show heroin-related deaths per 100,000 population of 10.2 for Eastern Missouri and 3.3 for Central Missouri. Northwest and Southwest portions of the state have the lowest rates at 0.8 and 0.6, respectively.



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Central	0.3	0.6	1.0	0.9	1.7	2.0	3.3
Eastern	3.1	5.3	7.2	8.0	10.6	9.0	10.2
Northwest	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.8
Southeast	0.6	0.4	1.4	1.1	1.7	1.8	2.0
Southwest	0.2	0.2	0.7	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.6

Data sources: Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, Bureau of Vital Statistics (2014); Missouri Census Data Center (2014).

A collaborative effort among community groups in Eastern Missouri has sought to prevent further increases in heroin use and overdoses. The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (NCADA), with funding from the Division of Behavioral Health, has implemented the **Curiosity + Heroin: Not Even Once** campaign. The campaign uses a combination of traditional and social media to increase awareness, education, and access to community resources. In Central Missouri, local law enforcement has joined with prevention and treatment professionals to conduct town hall meetings. The Division of Behavioral Health contracts with twelve community-based, non-profit organizations to provide prevention programming in their respective communities. For individuals struggling with heroin and prescription painkillers, new treatment medications have become available in recent years that in combination with counseling and community support can increase the likelihood of sustained recovery. An effective response to the heroin problem requires a comprehensive approach including prevention, treatment, recovery support, and law enforcement.



[1]Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, Bureau of Vital Statistics (2014).

For more information please contact the Division of Behavioral Health at (573)751-4942 or email: adamail@dmh.mo.gov